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A

C O P Y

OF THE

King and Queen's Commission

Sent to the

CONVOCAATION

Now Assembled at

WESTMINSTER.

WILLIAM and MARTY, by the Grace of God, King and Queen of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defenders of the Faith, &c. To all to whom these Presents shall come Greeting; Whereas, in and by one Act of Parliament made at Westminster, in the 25th Year of the Reign of King Henry the Eighth, Reciting, That whereas the King's humble and obedient Subjects, the Clergy of this Realm of England, had not only acknowledged according to the Truth, that the Convocation of the same Clergy, were always, had been, and ought to be Assembled only by the King's Writ, but also submitting themselves to the King's Majesty, had promised in *Verbo Sacerdotis*, that they would never from thenceforth presume to Attempt, Alledge, Claim, or put in Ure, or Enact, Promulge, or Execute any new Canons, Constitutions, Ordinances Provincial or others, or by whatsoever other Name they should be called in the Convocation, unless the said King's most Royal Assent and Licence might to them be had, to make, promulge, and execute the same; and that the said King did give his most Royal Assent and Authority in that behalf.

It was therefore Enacted by the Authority of the said Parliament, according to the said Submission and Petition of the said Clergy, among other things; That they, nor any of them from thenceforth should Enact, Promulge, or Execute any such Canons, Constitutions or Ordinances Provincial, by whatsoever Name they might be called in their Convocations in time coming, which always should be Assembled by Authority of the King's Writ, unless the same Clergy might have the King's most Royal Assent and Licence, to Make, Promulge, and Execute such Canons, Constitutions and Ordinances, Provincial or Synodal, upon Pain of every one of the said Clergy doing contrary to the said Act; and being thereof Convicted, to suffer Imprisonment, and make Fines at the King's Will.

And further, by the said Act it is Provided, That no Canons, Constitutions, or Ordinances should be Made, or put in Execution within this Realm, by Authority of the Convocations of the Clergy, which should be contrariant or repugnant to the King's Prerogative Royal, or the Customs, Laws, or Statutes of this Realm, any thing contained in the said Act to the contrary thereof notwithstanding.

And lastly, It is also Provided by the said Act, That such Canons, Constitutions, Ordinances and Synodals Provincial, which then were already made, and which then were not contrariant or repugnant to the Laws, Statutes and Customs of this Realm, nor to the Damage or Hurt of the King's Prerogative Royal; should then still be Used and Executed as they were before the making of the said Act, until such time as they should be viewed, searched, or otherwise ordered and determined by the Persons mentioned in the said Act, or the most part of them, according to the Tenor, Form and Effect of the said Act, as by the said Act, among divers other things more fully and at large, it doth and may appear.

And Whereas The particular Forms of Divine Worship, and the Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things of their own Nature Indifferent and alterable, and so acknowledged it is but reasonable, that upon weighty and important Considerations, according to the various Exigency of Times and Occasions; such Changes and Alterations should be made therein, as to those that are in Place and Authority, should from Time to Time seem either necessary or expedient.

And Whereas the Book of Canons is fit to be reviewed, and made more suitable to the State of the Church; And Whereas there are divers Defects and Abuses in the Ecclesiastical Courts and Jurisdictions, and particularly there is not sufficient Provision made for the removing of Scandalous Ministers, and for the Reformation of Manners either in Minister or People; And Whereas it is not fit, that there should be a strict Method prescribed for the Examination of such Persons as desire to be admitted into Holy Orders, both as to their Learning and Manners: Know ye, That We, for divers urgent and weighty Causes and Considerations, Us thereunto especially moving, of our especial Grace, certain Knowledge, and meer Motion; have by Vertue of our Prerogative Royal, and Supreme Authority in causes Ecclesiastical, given and granted, and by these Presents do give and grant, full, free and lawful Liberty, Licence, Power and Authority into the Right Reverend Father in God, Henry Lord Bishop of London, President of this present Convocation for the Province of Canterbury (upon the Suspension of the Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury) during this present Parliament now Assembled; and in his Absence, to such other Bishops as shall be appointed President thereof, and to the rest of the Bishops of the same Province, and to all Deans of Cathedral Churches, Arch-Deacons, Chapters and Colledges, and the whole Clergy of every several Diocess within the said Province; That they the said Lord Bishop of London, or other President of the said Convocation, and the rest of the Bishops, and other the said Clergy of this present Convocation within the said Province of Canterbury, or the greatest number of them, whereof the President of the said Convocation to be always one, shall and may from Time to Time, during this present Parliament, Confer, Treat, Debate, Consider, Consult and Agree of and upon such Points, Matters, Causes and Things, as we from Time to Time shall propose, or cause to be proposed by the said Lord Bishop of London, or other President of the said Convocation, comencing Alterations and Amendments of the Liturgy and Canons, and Orders, Ordinances and Constitutions for the Reformation of Ecclesiastical Courts, for the removing of scandalous Ministers, for the Reformation of Manners either in Ministers or People, and for the Examination of such Persons, as desire to be admitted into Holy Orders, and all such other Points, Causes and Matters as We shall think necessary and expedient, for advancing the Honour and Service of Almighty God, the good and quiet of the Church, and the better Government thereof.

And We do also by these Presents, give and grant unto the said Lord Bishop of London, or other President of the said Convocation, and to the rest of the Bishops of the said Province of Canterbury, and unto all Deans of Cathedral Churches, Arch-Deacons, Chapters and Colledges, and the whole Clergy of every several Diocess within the said Province, full, free, and lawful Liberty, Licence, Power and Authority, That they the said Lord Bishop of London, or other President of the said Convocation, and the rest of the said Bishops, and other the Clergy of the same Province, or the greatest number of them that shall be present in Person, or by their Proxies, shall and may from Time to Time, draw into Forms, Rules, Orders, Ordinances, Constitutions and Canons, such matters as to them shall seem necessary and expedient for the Purposes above-mentioned; and the same set down in Writing from Time to Time, to Exhibit and Deliver, or cause to be Exhibited and Delivered unto Us, to the end that We, as Occasion shall require, may thereupon have the Advice of our Parliament. And that such, and so many of the said Canons, Orders, Ordinances, Constitutions, Matters, Causes and Things as shall be thought requisite and convenient by our said Parliament, may be presented to Us in due Form, for our Royal Assent, if upon Mature Consideration thereof, we shall think fit to Enact the same. In Witness whereof, We have caused these our Letters to be made Patent; Witness our selves at Westminster, the 30th Day of November, in the First Year of Our Reign,

1510

Per Breve de privato Sigillo,

BURKER.

Vera Copia,

J. C. N. P.